

July 31, 2018

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment (WT Docket No. 17-79)

Dear Federal Communications Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to share my views on this important topic. As a member of the Iowa Governor's Commission on Community Action Agencies (CAA), my particular interest around wireless connectivity is ensuring all communities in Iowa benefit from next-generation wireless services – particularly the low-income, elderly, and disabled residents we serve. My views today are based on my service as a commissioner but the opinions expressed today are solely my personal observations.

The common mission of the 18 CAA's in Iowa is simple: Helping people help themselves. Increasingly, that means ensuring people have adequate access to mobile and broadband technology. With connectivity, our clients are able to connect to the people, resources, and information that help us support them and achieve our mission.

More often than not, we've found the communities we serve depend on their smartphones for connectivity. This lines up with research from the Pew Center that over 30% of low-income households are dependent on smartphone internet access only. If that connectivity is as fast as a wired connection, as 5G promises to be, having a wireless only connection will no longer be the barrier it is in some communities today.

I am heartened to see the Commission taking steps to help 5G get here faster by reducing red tape caused by old rules. With 99 counties in Iowa, we understand the need to streamline the network buildout process so it's not just the big cities that get 5G but also our small towns. If companies are tied up with delays and high fees, it's going to take that much longer for each and every Iowan to see the next generation of connectivity.

The communities that the Iowa CAA's serve could truly benefit from 5G. From tele-health opportunities for the elderly, wireless-broadband speeds for those that are smartphone dependent, and driverless cars for the disabled, 5G promises to bring transformation to Iowa. I urge you to continue to take strides to making this a reality. The sooner we can connect all our communities, the faster we can help all Iowans help themselves

Sincerely,



Mary Whisenand